

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
COMMUNITY CARE LICENSING DIVISION
CENTRAL COAST AREA REGIONAL OFFICE
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To the CPR Commission,

September 23rd 2004

I worked in DDS for 17½ years as a Psych. Tech., Hospital Peace Officer and an Investigator. Since 1995 all HPOs hired by DDS have to have full police academy training but the Investigators still take the Specialized Investigators Basic Course the same as we do. DDS Investigators and HPOs DO NOT carry firearms, just like us. The investigations the Investigators conduct are very similar to the investigations we conduct. Also DDS Investigators do background checks, based on fingerprint results/rap sheets, that are similar to our Arrest Onlys. Most, but not all, HPOs do only security guard work. They patrol the facility grounds, answer help calls, take an occasional crime report and in only a few facilities do they complete a preliminary crime report then refer it to the Investigator for further investigation if they cannot close it out.

Why can they remain with Peace Officer status yet we can't when our jobs are almost identical?

If they hire people without Peace Officer status to conduct our investigations who is going to train them to do our complex investigations? Will the department require us to train these people and then let us go? I hear Licensing Program Analysts (LPAs) say all the time they are glad to have us because they do not want, or have the time, to conduct complex investigations especially when the investigation involves sexual abuse of children.

Thank You for Your Attention,

Valerie Harris, Special Investigator I